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SUBJECT: PRC/SUDAN: MORE FROM SPECIAL ENVOY LIU GUIJIN ON
HIS DARFUR/CHAD VISIT

REF: BEIJING 845

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson. Reasons 1.
4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The Government of Sudan is ready to engage with rebel groups at any time, and Western nations should pressure rebel groups to participate fully in the peace process, Chinese Special Envoy for Darfur Liu Guijin told Beijing-based diplomats March 12. Press reporting on the Government of Sudan should be more balanced, because unbalanced negative reporting creates a disincentive for Sudanese Government cooperation. Sudan's conflict with Chad is intrinsically connected to the Darfur issue and will be difficult to solve, but mediation by the Republic of the Congo and Libya has produced positive results. End Summary.

¶2. (C) In a March 12 briefing for Beijing-based diplomats, Chinese Special Envoy for Darfur Liu Guijin expounded on his recently-completed trip to the UK, Sudan, Chad and France. The briefing supplemented a March 7 press conference for journalists and diplomats (reftel).

Pressuring Rebels is Key

¶3. (C) In addition to reiterating points covered in his March 7 press briefing, Liu emphasized the need for the international community to pressure Sudanese rebels to engage fully in the peace process. He said the Sudanese Government is willing to hold talks with "any rebels at any time and in any place" and is willing to consider new requests from the rebels. Despite having limited influence in the region, Liu said, China has been pressuring the rebel forces to join the talks and urges the rest of the international community to create a conducive environment for the peace process. Liu blamed much of the current situation on a "deep misunderstanding" between the international community and the Sudanese government and urged the resumption of dialogue as a means of building trust and mutual understanding.

Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative

¶4. (C) Citing the five areas in which the government of Sudan had taken steps to facilitate UNAMID deployment -- Status of Forces Agreement, night flight clearance, land-use rights, customs clearances and visas for peacekeepers (reftel) -- Liu noted that the Western media ignore good news in Sudan, which creates a disincentive for the Government of Sudan to cooperate. He urged a more "balanced" approach and said positive reporting will encourage greater cooperation from

the Sudanese Government. China fears that if the problems in Sudan are not solved, Darfur will turn into a "permanent problem, like Afghanistan, Iraq or Somalia." He added that China seeks a "holistic approach" in which all stakeholders, including the African Union, UN, and P5, make efforts toward a solution and applauded recent UK and French efforts to reduce tensions with Khartoum.

Chad: A Critical Piece

15. (C) Liu stressed that Sudan needs to repair relations with neighboring countries, particularly Chad, because the conflict between Chad and Sudan is linked to Darfur. He noted that China is not a formal mediator between the two countries and lauded efforts by Libya and the Republic of the Congo to mediate the conflict. Liu cited plans for the leaders of Sudan and Chad to meet March 12 at a regional conference in Senegal as a positive sign of progress, but noted pessimistically that the conflict will ultimately not be easy to solve.

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